

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A method of forming a tablet product, which comprises: providing a perforate plate in the form of a planar disk having plural perforations arranged in a circular path on the disk, each perforation extending from a first opening in a first side of the disk to a second opening on a second side of the disk; and a first director blade spaced from the first side of the disk;
the method also comprising the step of:-

a) having relative rotary motion of the perforate plate and said first director blade with powder being disposed on the first side of the plate on a first path thereof which is different from the circular path;

and the method further comprising the following steps while there is relative rotary motion;

b) closing off a one of the perforations perforation in the disk by inserting a blanking pin into the perforation through the second opening a perforated plate;

c) directing powder from the first path onto the circular path;

d) directing powder on the circular path into said closed-off perforation by the sweeping action of a first director blade spaced from said perforated plate;

e) compacting said powder in the closed-off perforation by inserting a compaction pin into the closed-off perforation through the first opening, to form a tablet; and

f) transferring said tablet from the closed-off perforation through the second opening of by withdrawing the blanking pin from the perforation through the second opening to reopen the perforation, and moving the compacting pin towards the second opening to transfer the compacted powder contents from the perforation.;

characterized by relative rotary motion of the perforated plate and said first director blade.

2. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the first director blade is held static and the perforated plate moves in rotary fashion relative thereto.

3-9. (cancelled)

10. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the first director blade presents a forward acute angle to the path of relative motion.

11. (Original) A method according to claim 10, wherein said forward acute angle is between 1 and 60°.

12. (Original) A method according to claim 11, wherein the forward acute angle is between 5 and 25°.

13. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 10, wherein the first director blade presents multiple forward acute angles to the path of relative motion.

14. (Original) A method according to claim 13, wherein the first director blade is curved in form.

15. (Original) A method according to claim 13, wherein the first director blade is articulated in form.

16. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 10, wherein the first director blade has a flat tail section.

17. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein a thin layer of powder is left on the perforated plate after movement of the first director blade.

18. (Original) A method according to claim 17, wherein the depth of said thin layer of powder is from 3 to 20 mm.

19. (Original) A method according to claim 18, wherein the depth of said thin layer of powder is from 4 to 8 mm.

20. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the powder is further ~~directable~~ directed into the perforation by at least one subsequent director blade.

21. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 20, wherein the at least one subsequent director blade moves along the first side of the perforated plate at a lower level than that of the first director blade.

22. (Original) A method according to claim 21, wherein the distance between the level of movement of the first director blade and the at least one subsequent director blade is 0 to 12 mm.

23. (Original) A method according to claim 22, wherein the distance between the level of movement of the first director blade and the at least one subsequent director blade is 1 to 3 mm.

24. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 1, additionally comprising the step of removing excess powder from said circular path and perforated plate ~~subsequent to directing the excess powder back to the first path subsequent to step d) into the perforation.~~

25. (Original) A method according to claim 24, comprising removing said excess powder by the action of a wiper.

26. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein said tablet is transferred to a container.

27. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the contents of the perforation are transferable by the action of a transfer pin.

28. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 26~~claim 1~~, wherein transfer of the contents of the perforation to the container comprises:

- a) reopening the perforation;
- b) placing the container in registration with the perforation; and
- c) transferring the contents of the perforation into the container.

29. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the contents of the perforation are transferable by the action of a vacuum system.

30.(Original) A method according to claim 29, wherein said vacuum system comprises a vacuum head and at least one vacuum cup.

31. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the powder is compacted to a tablet of volume between 20 and 50% of the original volume of powder in the closed-off perforation.

32. (Original) A method according to claim 31, wherein the powder is compacted to a tablet of volume between 30 and 45% of the original volume of powder in the closed-off perforation.

33. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 31, wherein the powder is compacted to form a dense tablet.

34. (Cancelled)

35. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 27, wherein the transfer pin and the compacting pin are integral.

36. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 27, wherein the transfer pin and the compacting pin are identical.

37. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein the container is a blind cavity.

38. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 37, wherein the blind cavity is selected from the group consisting of a blister pocket, an injection ~~moulded~~ molded plastic pocket, a capsule and a bulk container.

39. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~claim 1~~ claim 26, additionally comprising applying a lid to the container to protect the contents therein.

40. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 1 for ~~of~~ loading each of plural blisters arranged in series on an elongate blister strip with a tablet ~~product~~ wherein the perforations are arranged in a series on the circular path and each perforation is associated with its own blanking pin and compacting pin and wherein the method which comprises:

- a) closing off each perforation with its associated blanking pin in step b) ~~plural perforations in a perforated plate, said plural perforations being arranged in series;~~
- b) directing powder into ~~said plural~~ each closed-off perforations ~~perforation in step d)~~ by the sweeping action of the first ~~a first~~ director blade ~~spaced from said perforated plate;~~
- c) compacting said powder in each ~~of the plural~~ closed-off ~~perforations~~ perforation in step e) by inserting the associated compacting pin into the closed-off perforation through the first opening to form a tablet; and
- d) transferring said tablet from the second opening of in each of the perforations perforation to a corresponding blister of said elongate blister strip, in step f) by withdrawing the associated blanking pin from each perforation through the second opening and moving the associated compacting pin towards the second opening.

~~characterized by relative rotary motion of the perforated plate and said first director blade.~~

41. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~claim 41~~claim 40, wherein in step ~~e~~ f each perforation of the perforated plate is serially brought into registration with the corresponding blister of the blister strip.

42. (Original) A method according to claim 41, wherein at registration the perforated plate is rotating and the blister strip is moving on a linear path.

43. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the tablet product comprises a medicament.

44-85. (Cancelled)